

ESSENTIAL WISDOM
from a
SPIRITUAL MASTER

SADHGURU
Yogi, Mystic and Visionary



JAICO PUBLISHING HOUSE

Ahmedabad Bangalore Bhopal Chennai
Delhi Hyderabad Kolkata Mumbai

Published by Jaico Publishing House
A-2 Jash Chambers, 7-A Sir Phirozshah Mehta Road
Fort, Mumbai - 400 001
jaicopub@jaicobooks.com
www.jaicobooks.com

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ESSENTIAL WISDOM FROM A SPIRITUAL MASTER
ISBN 978-81-7992-882-0

First Jaico Impression: 2008
Third Jaico Impression: 2009

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Printed by
Rashmi Graphics
#3, Amrutwel CHS Ltd., C.S. #50/74
Ganesh Galli, Lalbaug, Mumbai-400 012
E-mail: tiwarijp@vsnl.net



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Seeker's Predicament

*From muses and mystics you did hear
Seeming to be the sounds of phantom lands
In ignorance's bind, lifelike phantom seems
Oh, creatures of surface, the depths of life will you ever seek.*

— Sadhguru

Knowing not where he comes from, knowing not where he is bound, the seeker's predicament is indeed pathetic. Trapped in layers of ignorance that bind more tightly than any cement or concrete, the seeker's pain is known only to those who have lived it.

Starting his journey from an obscure point in evolution, where life chooses to bestow awareness and conscious seeking in him, the seeker is confronted with a plethora of choices and uncertainties on the path. Without proper guidance and the necessary Grace, like a rudderless boat, the seeker goes in endless circles in a boundless ocean, alternately chasing some glimmer of light on the horizon and plugging those self-destructive leaks his ignorance keeps punching into himself.

Like a solitary shepherd in the mountains, lovingly resting his flock under the moonlit skies between two hard days of a long journey, whose course and outcome are known only to him, these interactions with the Master reflect a rare kind of intimacy, understanding and compassion that spring from the Master's deep urge to share and deliver.

He knows that the kindness, the insights and the wisdom, which he so generously shares, soothe the bruises and the wounds of the day and firm up the resolve of the flock to walk with him one more day. Thus, day after day, the Master charms his flock, infusing an ethereal lightness into those he can, while numbing the pain and biding his time with those he cannot.

SEEKER: Sadhguru, as I walk this path, I am becoming aware of the many fears and insecurities I have within me. How do I leave these behind and move ahead?

SADHGURU: You don't have to leave your fears and insecurities because they don't really exist. You keep creating them unconsciously. If you don't create them, they don't really exist. Why you create them and how to stop creating them, that's your question. The fundamental reason why fear has arisen in you is – one way of looking at it is – in this vast existence of which you don't know the beginning or the end, you're just a little human being. Being the small entity that you are right now, naturally fear is there. It's overwhelming; there is fear and insecurity about what will happen to you.

As long as you're identified as a physical body, as long as your experience of life is limited to your physical and mental faculties, fear and insecurity are inevitable. It's just that different people may be at different levels of fear and insecurity. Today, if your life is happening well, you might have forgotten your insecurity. Tomorrow, if your life is turned upside down, you will be reminded because it's always within you. Only when a person begins to experience himself

beyond the limitations of his physical body and mind, then this person can become free from insecurity and fear.

Experiencing yourself beyond the physical is what we're referring to as spiritual. When I say spiritual, don't think it is about going to a temple. Don't think it is about praying for this or that. If you look at your prayers, ninety-five percent of the prayers in the world are all about either asking for something, fundamentally asking for protection, or for being taken care of. There's nothing spiritual about it; it is plain basic survival. In most people, the very basis of prayer is fear and insecurity. If prayer exists in your life as an act only, it is obscene, being reverential towards one aspect and not being so to everything else. If you become prayerful, that's wonderful, and if you're using an act of prayer towards becoming that quality, that's fine. Now if you're routing your survival through the heavens, that's very stupid; even worms and insects take care of their own survival. So when I say spiritual, I am talking about you beginning to experience that which is not physical. Once this spiritual dimension is alive, once you start experiencing yourself beyond the limitations of the physical and the mental, only then there's no such thing as fear. Fear is just the creation of an overactive and out-of-control mind.

SEEKER: *But Sadhguru, isn't it very natural and human to become anxious when things don't go the way we expect them to?*

SADHGURU: Why are you making all your incapacibilities natural and human? Now if a few things aren't going smoothly in my life and if I don't become anxious about them, if I retain my sense of balance and continue to do what I have to do, would you call me inhuman? Is that what you're saying? When things aren't going the way you want them to go, that's when your capability is most needed. When you become anxious, do you become more capable or less capable? Less capable, isn't it? When you most need your

capability, you're forsaking it; would you call that an intelligent way to act? So what you're saying is to live unintelligently is human; that's a very wrong idea. To live intelligently is what being human is all about.

SEEKER: *Much of the anxiety I experience comes through my relationships. Isn't it reasonable to expect some understanding from other people?*

SADHGURU: When you live in this world, there are various types of complex interactions happening. As your field of play increases, the complexity of interaction also goes on increasing. If you're just sitting in a cubicle, working on your computer with only one other person, you need only a little understanding; but if you're managing a thousand people, you need a vast understanding of everybody. Now suppose you're managing a thousand people and you want all these people to understand you, then you're not going to manage anything. You need to understand the limitations and the capabilities of these thousand people and do what you can; only then will you have the power to move the situation the way you want it to go. If you're waiting for these thousand people to understand you and act, it is only a pipe dream; it's never going to happen.

SEEKER: *Suppose somebody is in a close relationship with me and is very important to me. Shouldn't I expect better understanding from them?*

SADHGURU: That's the point; the closer the relationship is, the more effort you should make to understand them, but that's not what's happening in your case, Ram. It so happened, once there was a man who had been slipping in and out of a coma for several months, with his wife staying at his bedside night and day. When he came to, in those few moments of consciousness, he motioned for her to come closer. As she sat beside him, he said, "I've been thinking... you have been with me through all the bad times in my life.

When I got fired, you were there to support me. When my business went down the tubes, you were there working overtime and doing night shifts. When I got shot you were by my side. When we lost the house in that legal clash, you were right there beside me. Now my health is failing, and you're still by my side. Now when I consider all this, I think you only bring me bad luck!" This is exactly what you're doing to yourself and to your relationships. Somebody becomes closer and dearer to you only as you understand them better. If they understand you, they enjoy the closeness of the relationship. If you understand them better, then you enjoy the closeness.

SEEKER: *This is easier said than done. It is difficult to always be there...*

SADHGURU: See, it's not that the other person is totally bereft of understanding. With your understanding you can create situations where the other person would be able to understand you better. If you're expecting the other to understand and comply with you all the time while you don't understand the limitations, the possibilities, the needs and the capabilities of that person, then conflict is all that will happen; it is bound to happen. Unfortunately, the closest relationships in the world have more conflict going on than there is between India and Pakistan. India and Pakistan have fought only three battles.

In your relationships, you have fought many more battles than this and are still fighting; isn't it so? This is because your line of understanding and theirs is different. If you cross this L.O.C., this Line of Control, they will get mad. If they cross it, you will get mad. If you move your understanding beyond theirs, their understanding also becomes a part of your understanding. You will be able to embrace their limitations and capabilities. In everyone, there are some positive things and some negative things. If you embrace all this in your understanding, you can make the relationship the way you

want it. If you leave it to their understanding, it will become accidental. If they are very magnanimous, things will happen well for you; if not, the relationship will break up.

All I am asking is: do you want to be the one who decides what happens to your life? Whether they are close relationships, professional, political, global or whatever, don't you want to be the person who decides what happens in your life? If you do, you better include everything and everybody into your understanding. You should enhance your understanding to such a point that you can look beyond people's madness also. There are very wonderful people around you, but once in a while they like to go crazy for a few minutes. If you don't understand that, you will lose them. If you don't understand their madness, you will definitely lose them. If you do, then you know how to handle them. Life is not always a straight line; you have to do many things to keep it going. If you forsake your understanding, your capability will be lost. Whether it's a question of personal relationships or professional management, in both places you need understanding; otherwise, you won't have fruitful relationships.

SEEKER: Talking specifically about the work situation, there's a company we have been approaching for business and they're taking their own sweet time in letting us know if we've got the deal. It's extremely frustrating and de-motivating. I'm tempted to just curse the client and move on. Now if our understanding encompasses the client's difficulties, we may be more at peace, but wouldn't that dull the edge we need to pursue and close the deal?

SADHGURU: If you really want the best deals in life, don't try to make deals. You must be in such a way that your client should fall in love with you in every way. This is not a trick. The deal will happen if it's necessary; it won't happen if it's not. The deal is for both people's well-being, so it must be needed by both of you. Once we live in the world, there are

transactions. Some are of a personal nature, others are different. All of them affect your life. Whether you talk to a taxi driver for a minute, or you talk to your boss, or speak to your client, husband, wife or child; every transaction is affecting your life. Now the problem with you is that you hold one transaction above the other. You involve yourself more with one and less with the other. It won't work like that. All these things are needed for you to have a fruitful life. Why don't you just fall in love with the whole situation? As long as you wish to be in that situation, make it happen like a huge love affair. Why not? That's how it should be. Only then work becomes effortless. What is it you're calling a love affair? It's unconditional involvement and doing whatever is needed. If you don't have that sense of involvement, you will always try to get the best deal out of somebody. That means you must meet the dumbest people in the world. Intelligent people will never bite your dumb deals. There once was this almost confirmed bachelor who for months had been pursuing an attractive lady and became her most devoted admirer. At long last he collected sufficient courage to ask her the most momentous of all questions. "There are quite a lot of advantages to being a bachelor," he began, "but there comes a time when one longs for the companionship of another being. A being who will regard one as perfect, as an idol to be worshiped and treated as one's absolute own, who will be kind and faithful when times are tough and hard, who will share one's joys and sorrows." To his delight he saw a sympathetic gleam in her eyes. She nodded in agreement and then said, "I think it's a great idea! Can I help you choose which puppy to buy?"

So do you see that for you to make a deal, you should only meet people who are more stupid than you? If you meet people who are more intelligent than you, there's no way to get the deal to your advantage. If you just give yourself and see how both of you can be benefited from the deal, then

whenever it is possible, it will happen. Of course, deals are subject to many other conditions such as market situations, economic conditions or the world situation, but if you establish your inner way of being and are doing the best you can do, then what has to happen, according to your capability, will happen. What you can't do won't happen anyway. Even if you break your head it won't happen, but that's okay. You need not be a super human being capable of doing everything. If you don't do what you're capable of doing, that's when it's not okay, that's when you have failed. So don't worry about always pulling off deals, deals and more deals. Just learn to offer yourself, which is the best possible thing that you can offer to the whole situation. Then naturally people will take it if it's what they need.

God didn't intend this. You have become a disciple of the devil if your whole life is about making deals. The devil is always making a deal with somebody. God never made a deal with anybody. Once it so happened that a priest was walking on the street and he saw a man who had just been stabbed. The man was lying face down on the street, struggling for breath and writhing in pain. The priest had always been taught that compassion was the highest thing, love is the way, and all that stuff. Naturally, he ran to the man. He turned him over and saw that it was the devil himself. He was shocked and horrified and quickly backed away. The devil begged him, "Please take me to the hospital! Do something!" The priest hesitated and thought, "Why should I save you, the devil? You're against God. Why should I save you? You should die. The whole priesthood is about somehow banishing the devil, and it looks like somebody has almost done a good job of it. I'll just let you die." The devil said, "Don't do this. Jesus told you to love thine enemy, and you know I am your enemy. You must love me." Then the priest said, "I know the devil always quotes the scriptures. I'm not going to fall for that." So the devil said, "Don't be a fool. If I die, who will come to

church? Who will seek God? Then what will happen to you? Okay, you won't listen to the scriptures, but now I am talking business; you better listen." The priest understood that this was true. With no devil, who would come to church? This made business sense. He immediately put the devil on his shoulders and took him to the hospital.

So don't go about making deals for selfish reasons. Maybe you haven't attained to your full Divine nature, but at least in this case let us imitate God for a while. God doesn't make deals. Deals will be offered to you in so many ways. In a way, everybody is just a businessman. Everybody is trying to pull off some deal: some in the market place, another maybe at home, another maybe in the temple, and a few maybe even with their spiritual process, but everybody is trying to pull off some kind of a deal. When you get a good deal, you are all very civilized and nice but if a deal goes bad, you will yell and scream. All priorities in life will change. Deals may sometimes boomerang in your face. One day Shankaran Pillai's barn burned down. Shankaran Pillai, feeling dejected and deflated, refused his lunch and set off for the bar to drown his misery. His wife, taking things into her own hands, called the insurance company and boomed into the phone, "We had that barn insured for five lakh rupees and I want my money NOW! My husband is so upset he's missed his meals!" The agent replied, "Hey, Mrs. Pillai, hold on a minute. Insurance doesn't work quite like that. We will need to ascertain the value of what was in the barn and provide you with objects of comparable worth." There was a long pause before Mrs. Pillai very gravely replied, "Then I'd like to cancel my husband's life insurance."

SEEKER: *Oh my God...*

SADHGURU: Who wants something of comparable worth, especially a husband of all things! (Laughs). Wouldn't you agree Joyce? There's something called vasanas. Do you know

what vasana means? They are certain old qualities and flavors within you. However much you may try to pretend that you're a very nice and loving person, when deals are offered, suddenly old vasanas will take control of you. There's an urge to bite the deal. That's why on the spiritual path we talk about setting a goal. If you set a goal for yourself, you don't bite any deals on the side and you don't go off the path. The goal itself doesn't take you anywhere. In fact, it's a barrier. It has to be dropped somewhere in the process of growth. The goal is only there to ensure that you don't make any more deals. It's not there to get you bound. It's there to release you from the temptation of deals.

SEEKER: *Sadhguru, how does yoga help me perform better in this environment?*

SADHGURU: When we say 'yoga', probably for many of you it means some physical postures, twisting yourself into some impossible postures. That's not what we're referring to as yoga. Yoga means to be in perfect tune. Your body, mind and spirit and the existence are in absolute harmony. When you fine-tune yourself to such a point where everything functions so beautifully within you, naturally the best of your abilities will just flow out of you. When you're happy, your energies always function better. Do you see that when you're happy you have endless energy? Even if you don't eat, if you don't sleep, it doesn't matter; you can go on and on. Have you noticed this? So just knowing a little happiness is liberating you from your normal limitations of energy and capability.

Now yoga is the science of activating your inner energies in such a way that your body, mind and emotions function at their highest peak. If I don't sleep for two days, you won't notice any difference in me. I can still have a full day of activity. When your body and mind function in a completely different state of relaxation and a certain level of blissfulness, you can be released from so many things that most people are